RRR
ROTHBARD-ROCKWELL REPORT

Special Memorial Issue

MURRAY N. ROTHBARD
1926 – 1995

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From the Editors and Publishers

This special issue of the *Rothbard-Rockwell Report* is dedicated to the memory of the late Murray N. Rothbard.

His death is an irreparable loss to all of us, but his contributions to the cause of liberty—only some of which are celebrated in the following pages—are on an almost unimaginable scale. So he leaves behind not only the precious memories treasured by family and friends, but also an intellectual legacy that will enable us to take our country back, and future generations to keep it.

As to the future of *RRR*: we will not only continue to publish, but to intensify our fight for the Old Right ideals embodied and upheld by Murray.

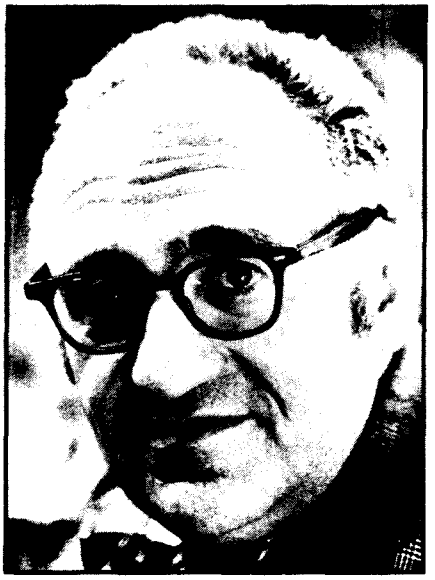
No one can replace Murray Rothbard, but with the help of his friends and colleagues, we pledge to bring you the best writers and the most insightful and audacious analysis available, all from an Old Right point of view. And this includes unpublished Rothbard.

Think of us, in style and substance as well as size, as the opposite of the boring and statist *National Review*, and its epicene and statist editor, William F. Buckley, Jr.

The right-wing populist revolution that so delighted Murray in the final months of his life has barely begun. Murray did not live to see its triumph, but we can, and will—provided we build on the foundations he left us.

Join us in this great cause, for the people are on our side. The neocons, left-libertarians, and official cons may seem to be riding high, but we'll make sure their next ride is on a rail. Can't you hear the tar and feathers boiling now? ■

Honoring the Legacy of MURRAY N. ROTHBARD



Our upcoming conference, "The Republican Elites: Who They Are and Why They Can't Be Trusted," to be held March 31–April 2, will start off on Friday night with "A Tribute to Murray Rothbard." We invite you to join us in honoring a great man.. Call 800-325-7257 for information and reservations.

Joseph Sobran

Editor, *Sobran's*

It wasn't like Murray Rothbard to die. Nothing he ever did was more out of character, more difficult to reconcile with everything we knew of him, more downright inconceivable. Murray dead is a contradiction in terms.

He was 68, an age at which most men are retired or coasting or at least leveling off somewhat. He had done none of the above. He wrote, thought, argued, and laughed with undiminished energy, continually surprising and outrunning even his devoted disciples. He was still the main event at any libertarian gathering he attended.

Murray's mind was as open as the sky but decisive as a bear trap, willing to question anything and ready to accept any answer warranted by reason. It didn't matter if nobody else had ever taken a given position: if Murray thought it was right, he would take it up and defend it with everything he had. He reduced sacred cows to hamburger. I've heard him attack Lincoln and defend the Mafia (up to a point) on libertarian principles.

He was born in New York in 1926 and showed his true colors early: As a boy, he shocked a family gathering, at which the adult loyalties were mostly divided between Stalin and Trotsky, by asking, "What's so bad about Franco, anyway?" Dinnerware clattered to the floor. Murray's intellectual career had begun.

Among New York intellectual of his era, being an anti-communist was like being a monk in

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the Playboy mansion. The few who opposed communism were usually liberal or democratic socialist. Murray also opposed liberalism and socialism, democratic or otherwise. What's more, he opposed Cold War conservatism, and during the 1950s he broke with Ayn Rand's Objectivist circle, whose doctrinaire atheism could not brook the Christian faith of Murray's wife, Joey.

Murray took his doctorate in economics at Columbia in 1956, and by 1962 had published a classic treatise, *Man, Economy, and State*. He quickly became a leader of the libertarian movement, and remained its presiding thinker until last week, when a heart attack felled him. He and Joey, still inseparable, were at their optometrist's office at the time.

E. J. Dionne, Jr., of the *Washington Post*, recently noted the influence of libertarian ideas among Republicans in the new Congress and quoted with alarm Murray's dictum: "If you wish to know how libertarians regard the state and any of its acts, simply think of the state as a criminal band and all of the libertarian attitudes will logically fall into place." Actually, Murray was only echoing St. Augustine: "What is the state without justice but a band of robbers?"

Murray eventually decided that there could be no such thing as a truly just state and moved from limited-government libertarianism to philosophical anarchism. He was convinced that all the functions of government could be performed by private action and private agencies. It's a challenging idea, and I'm not sure I can quite agree, and yet it doesn't seem as wild as it once did. After all, by a very conservative estimate, a hundred million people have died at the hands of their own governments in this century. Given that record, how bad could anarchy be?

No short account can convey how much fun Murray had, and how much fun he was to be around. You got the impression that he'd rather have a good laugh than a Nobel Prize. Though he was a powerful and seminal thinker, it never even occurred to him to try to impress anyone. He was as earthy as a cab-driver, and he listened with courtesy and unfeigned interest to everyone.

For such a radical thinker, Murray was surprisingly conservative in moral and cultural matters. He disliked the moral relativism of many libertarians. Though he was Jewish, his sympathies were Catholic, and he retained his early respect for the Old Right of H. L. Mencken, John Flynn, and Robert Taft—who favored limited government at home and abroad.

His life ended too soon, still going full tilt: Four new Rothbard books are due this year. We who mourn him have the consolation that his work will outlive us. ■

(Reprinted from the *Washington Times*, January 14, 1995).

Clyde S. Wilson

Professor of History
University of South Carolina

Murray is no longer with us in the flesh, but the fireball of his mind and spirit will be giving us light and energy deep into the twenty-first century.

Two characteristics—in addition to genius, integrity, and courage—distinguished Murray from the official libertarians and conservatives of the Manhattan editorial towers and Washington foundations. First, a consummate apprehension of Misesian praxeology. He always understood economics as social and ethical human action in the fullest sense. Thus he was never taken in by slogans like "capitalism" and "free trade" when they were used as cover for special arrangements for special interests. Murray believed in economic liberty, pure and simple, an economic liberty to be practiced by genuine human beings, not by statistical abstractions.

Second, Murray was deeply learned in American history. His *Conceived in Liberty* is as good a libertarian history of the foundations of America as can be written. His works on *America's Great Depression*, *The Panic of 1819*, and the tortured history of banking and currency make these difficult and crucial matters comprehensible in a way that no other historian has even approached.

It was the clarity of his historical vision that gave Murray his inimitable grasp of the events of the day. A typical Rothbard essay (like "the November Revolution and its Betrayal" in the January *RRR*) cuts through propaganda, cant, trivia to the heart and substance of the matter. The thing really at issue in that the historical moment is left starkly naked in all its aspects. No shred or corner of the enemy's smokescreen is left to obscure the vision. This was intellect, ethics, and inspiration at work in perfect harmony.

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Unlike the official libertarians and conservatives—the warfare wing of what Murray so aptly dubbed the "welfare-warfare state"—and like all great conservatives and libertarians, Murray did not advocate a particular version of the state. He knew America as a living proposition and a historical reality, not as a group of abstract slogans about equality and freedom. His analysis always centered in on what a particular phenomenon portended for that real America.

Unlike any of the official theorists, as his works show, he deeply understood the religious dimension of the American character, and he deeply understood, and identified with, the rebellious populist streak that makes for what in the national character is truly and distinctly American. It was this, above all else, that deeply offended establishmentarians: the irreverent refusal to accept their elevated self-image at face value.

So Murray has gone on into the Valhalla of happy warriors, preceded by those other chieftains of American liberty, M.E. Bradford and Russell Kirk. They differed on much, but they shared much. They were all stiff-armed by the official libertarian/conservatives. They all knew and represented an America that extended beyond the Hudson River and before 1932. They all inspired thousands of the thoughtful and were—the word is not too strong—beloved. Beloved only as leaders of wisdom, truth, and courage can be in a time starved for genuine leadership.

We perhaps should forgive the official conservative/libertarians for their endless offenses to these great men. The establishmentarians are products of World War II and the 1960s, both periods of radical deformation. They see themselves as the anointed mandarins of the New World Order to be imposed by the American state. They draw their models not from American history, of which they know nothing, but from the British imperial class; though they fall far short of being as bright or as tough as the Brits at their best.

So let them enjoy their wealth and power. They have seduced many but have inspired none. They are sometimes obeyed but never loved. Unlike Murray, they will be forgotten before the heat has vanished from the television screen. ■

Joseph R. Stromberg

Adjunct Scholar
Center for Libertarian Studies

Murray Newton Rothbard! The name conjures up a universe of associations for those of us who knew the man and his work. Murray Rothbard, the man who put the "anarcho" in "anarchocapitalism." Murray Rothbard, economist, historian, philosopher, film critic, and much else besides, whose writings massively influenced three generations of libertarians and conservatives.

I think that many of us in our forties, who first stumbled on the work of Rothbard in the late 1960s, can honestly say that no other single writer and scholar had quite the same impact on our thinking and worldview. As a college undergraduate in 1967 I was already a veteran of the Goldwater Youth and a self-proclaimed "libertarian conservative" after the school of Frank Meyer of *National Review*. That year I saw in the local bookstore a collection entitled *The Great Society Reader*. Flipping through it, I spotted a piece entitled "The Great Society: A Libertarian Critique" by Murray N. Rothbard, a name totally unknown to me at the time. I scanned it, but, alas, in my *National Review*-induced myopia I completely misunderstood where its author was coming from. "He's probably another liberal like Peter Viereck or Clinton Rossiter," I thought, "portraying himself as someone on the Right." I more or less forgot about the piece, and my meeting with the thought of Murray Rothbard had to wait another year and a half.

By early 1969 I was ready for consistent historical revisionism, "isolationism," and hard-core free-market economics. Bill Marina, one of my professors at Florida Atlantic University, was forcing me to look at Cold War revisionism and the American Empire through the medium of William Appleman Williams, and the Vietnam war was raising questions that the Goldwater–Buckley gang seemed unable to answer. Then came "The Death of Politics" by Karl Hess in the March 1969 *Playboy*, a bombshell in its own right and just the thing to shock some of us out of our Young Republican complacency.

Here was libertarianism without Frank Meyer's (con)fusionism, and here, more importantly, was a reference to Murray Rothbard's "Confessions

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of a Right-Wing Liberal" in *Ramparts* (June 15, 1968).

I was off on my quest.

Now came those days, turning into weeks, in which you live in the library, forgetting to eat, but pursuing every promising lead onto a new and exciting path. First the *Ramparts* piece finished off my conversion, as it were, to consistent foreign policy revisionism and "isolationism" and helped reorient my understanding (I was, after all, a History student) of the modern age. ("Left and Right: The Prospects for Liberty" nailed the whole thing down for me later). It also gave me a basic program. First and foremost, my task was to find every Rothbard work the university library had, read them, and then work interlibrary loan to death for those we lacked.

I believe that I—rather selfishly, I admit—kept *Man, Economy, and State* constantly checked out during 1969–70. I read it all, including those wonderful Rothbardian footnotes. (Murray was a footnoteur extraordinaire). Sometime during 1970 I took the standard undergrad survey economics course; A business-Keynesian, speaking to us from a television set, taught the class. Discussions were led by a harassed grad student with Chicagoite leanings.

As the antidote to all this I would rush home to the dorm after each brainwashing and read the pertinent section of *M.E.S.* This was an infallible method and tended to reinforce what I was learning from a masterwork praised by perhaps the two most qualified readers in the world, Ludwig von Mises (who called it "the result of many years of sagacious and discerning meditation" [*New Individualist Review*, Autumn 1962] and Henry Hazlitt (who called it "the most important general treatise on economic principles since Ludwig von Mises's *Human Action* in 1949" [*National Review*, September 25, 1962]. This was, of course, the famous Volker Fund edition, and it led me to other important works in the series (in one of which I found Rothbard's path-breaking "The Mantle of Science").

Thus Rothbard the economist. I soon found myself dealing with Rothbard the historian and Rothbard the philosopher (and applied political ethicist). In due course I discovered *The Panic of 1819* and *America's Great Depression*. Then came more Hoover revisionism—an area in which Murray was the great pioneer—in "Herbert Clark Hoover: A Reconsideration" (*N.I.R.*, Winter 1966) and "The Hoover Myth" (*Studies on the Left* [!], Summer 1966), and such eye-opening essays as "Money, the State and Modern Mercantilism" (*Modern Age*, Summer 1963) and the similar piece in *The Freeman* (November 1963). By now I had read "The Great Society: A Libertarian Critique" (the piece I had shrugged off in 1967), "The Transformation of the American Right" (*Continuum*, Summer 1964), and "The Anatomy of the State" (*Rampart Journal*, Summer 1965). All this Rothbardiana before 1971!

Murray's discussion of Old Right opposition to the Cold War in "Confessions of a Right-Wing Liberal" inspired my Senior Thesis and my M.A. Thesis in History. In time, this research led me to unearth the articles he had written in *Faith and Freedom* under the pseudonym of Aubrey Herbert (1955). (Especially good were the debate with the irritating Willi Schlamm and a piece denouncing Hawaiian statehood as an affront to the organic character of the American federation).

The point is that Murray Rothbard's writings had breath and depth and pushed us in the directions we needed to explore. In an age when specialists churn out trivia and drivel, Murray produced broad scholarship addressing important questions across the boundaries of several disciplines. I was hardly alone in my appreciation of his achievement. I remember that at the first Libertarian Scholars Conference (New York, September 1972) and the Cornell Seminar in American Economic History (June 1973), there was a certain competition among the younger generation to see who among us had read all the footnotes to *M.E.S.*, who had gone to the journals and ferreted out such pieces as "In Defense of 'Extreme Apriorism,'" "Praxeology: Reply to Schuller," "Epistemological Problems of Economics," or "Justice and Property Rights" (this last from the very obscure *Innovator*, January 1965).

And what exactly was it that Murray Rothbard was doing that so impressed us? We understood that Murray Rothbard was attempting to create a unified science of human liberty. He was not entirely alone in this, to be sure, but his prolific writings, boundless energy, and dedication put him in the forefront of the cause. Before Rothbard there

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had been classical liberals teetering on the edge of anarchism. There had been free-market anarchists. There had been Austrian School economists. There had been upholders of Natural Law and Natural Rights. There had been "isolationists," revisionist historians, and proponents of a critical sociology of the state. Murray Rothbard's goal was a grand synthesis of all these forms of knowledge. The result was a powerful vehicle of political understanding and the intellectual weaponry with which to begin the process of fundamental change. Here indeed was the unity of theory and practice!

Abandoning his great teacher Mises's Kantianism, Rothbard grounded his economics and politics solidly on the Aristotelian-Thomist tradition, neatly centered his revolutionary project within the intellectual heritage of Western civilization. (In this and in his later emphasis on the centrality of Christianity to any notion of Western civilization, he resembled his friend—and, on the Cold War, his opponent—Frank Meyer). To this solid base Rothbard brought perhaps the two most important things of all—an uncompromising love for liberty and its corollary, a passionate hatred of the liberticide state apparatus.

This commitment and the disciplined scholarship he brought to it prevented his falling into the whimsical topicality, elusiveness, and dilettantism of, say, a Robert Nozick. The Rothbardian synthesis seemed, and still seems, rather broad to me, and if the clever sheep ('once they get an idear in their 'eads there's no shiftin' it') over at *Critical Review* find it all too "one-dimensional," then so much the worse for them. (They might read, for one thing, Rothbard's introduction to de la Boeties's *Voluntary Slavery* if they truly crave subtle analysis and deft sociological reasoning.)

The parts of Rothbard's system *fit* one another. His Austrianism provided a corrective to the economic errors of the individualist anarchists; his anarchism led him outside the confines of Austrian *laissez faire* liberalism. His utter rejection of utilitarianism in favor of Natural Rights grounded his libertarianism on something more substantial than the general nihilism of the 1960s. His espousal of historical revisionism reinforced his realistic sociology of the state. And so on.

And now we come to Murray Rothbard the activist, the agitator, the man who knew that in the end human beings *act* and act as individuals, and that, rightly informed, they—and not the relations and forces of production—make history. As a propagandist and advocate he was a scholar-warrior, a veritable Thomas Paine clothed in Austrian armor. Where did he not publish in the pursuit of liberty? We find his work in *Studies on the Left, National Review, Ramparts, Rampart Journal, The Individualist, Continuum, Liberty, Libertarian Review, Skeptic, New Individualist Review, The Southern Partisan,* and in those journals that he edited, *Libertarian Forum, The Journal of Libertarian Studies, The Review of Austrian Economics,* and this list is hardly exhaustive.

All of this was underlined for me a couple of nights ago when I went into my filing cabinets looking for material to use in the World Civilization classes I am teaching. I was not consciously thinking about Murray Rothbard or of writing about him. At every turn and on every topic some work of Rothbard's came tumbling out of folders: Hoover revisionism, Progressive Era revisionism, denunciations of St. Woodrow, sympathy for secession (which played well down here in the South, I can assure you), "Towards a Reconstruction of Utility and Welfare Economics" (and all those great essays expounding the clear logic of praxeology), articles like "War, Peace and the State," "How to Destatize," "Society Without the State," his prophetic attack on radical feminism, movie reviews (like the one that helped me articulate my hatred for *Goodfellas*), and more.

The sheer range is astonishing. It would have been enough for four or five ordinary scholars, and I haven't even mentioned the multi-volume *Conceived in Liberty, Power and Market, For a New Liberty, The Ethics of Liberty,* and those great pamphlets such as "Myths of the Cold War," "What Has Government Done to Our Money?" and "Economic Depressions: Their Cause and Cure."

The wider world is beginning to realize what we already knew: Rothbard was onto things. Paul Johnson's discussion in *Modern Times* of the 1929 Depression is based on Rothbard's analysis. British scholar David Conway's *Farewell to Marx* is replete with Rothbard citations wherever economic issues are treated. And as Murray himself pointed out (*Liberty*, September 1988), writers

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on the British New Right, like Norman Barry, treat libertarianism and Rothbard's contributions to it with considerable respect.

Finally, there is Murray Rothbard the human being. Those of us who saw him and talked with him at conferences and seminars were privileged to know a truly "joyous libertarian" (the epithet Murray had awarded to H. L. Mencken). We will always remember Murray's laugh (more of a cackle, really), the humor with which he could treat almost any subject, the special Rothbardian use of language ("heroic," "monsters!"), "proper assumption of risk," *et cetera*).

Murray's ability always to say "So what?" in the face of some gem of statist conventional wisdom. Murray with the gloves off, taking on some enemy in his not-quite-Leninist polemical style. Murray, grim, muttering "the bastards!" on hearing of some minor statist atrocity against liberty. Murray, giving no ground whatsoever on abortion in an after-hours discussion at the Mises Institute's Atlanta Conference on "The Costs of War" last May, while building a coalition with paleoconservatives. Murray, who overcame my prejudices against all things New York. Murray, whimsically wondering in Atlanta whether, in a revolutionary situation, it would be immoral to blockade the hated *New York Times*. Murray, honored in May by a Confederate honor guard at Stone Mountain for his services to the causes of liberty and Southern rights. Murray, the born and bred New Yorker who thought the whole world should be sidewalks and shops, positively bubbling about "Trees! Trees!" after living a while in Northern California. Murray's habit of attacking utilitarians and other enemies with *reductio ad absurdum* by humorous example (which leads me to hope that somewhere a privatized lighthouse beams down on refugee redheads near the Oskar Lange Memorial in a place where the Jones family are not sovereign and where the Hatfields only shoot the *right* McCoys...).

I have little reason to doubt that in the coming decades, as we face the crises brought upon us by a wounded but still dangerous enemy and we make the choices that will have to be made if human liberty is to triumph in our part of the world, we will often ask ourselves "How would Murray Rothbard look at this?" We shall not ask in vain. We have his works and the tools he forged. May we use them well. ■

Paul Gottfried

Professor of Political Philosophy
Elizabethtown College

The recent, unexpected death of Murray N. Rothbard has deprived scholarship and serious conservative thought (which may be in danger of becoming oxymoronic) of an extraordinary exemplar. More than anyone else I have known, Murray emitted explosive intellectual energy. For most of his sixty-seven years, he worked fitfully and simultaneously on numerous projects, from investigations of current events to historical, philosophical, and technical economic tracts. He did all he undertook with unfailing brilliance and a flair for language which grew legendary.

One of his last essays, on electoral politics in New York State (published two months ago in the *RRR*), underscores a typically Rothbardian talent, making into an implausible treat something that in less able hands would be lethally dull. As we now grieve over the passing of our friend and teacher, it is natural to recall his indisputable strengths, his inexhaustible productiveness as a writer and scholar, his ready wit, and his appeal to the young, who flocked to his lectures and rushed to sit by his side at conferences. These are the strengths that most of his admirers associate with Murray, and it may therefore be useful for me to note another which may be less obvious.

Murray was the most unprogrammed human being I have had the fortune of knowing. He was also the truest anti-Communist of my acquaintance, not in the vulgar sense of parroting Cold War liberal slogans, but in the deeper existential sense of defying any form of democratic centralism. He simply would not take party orders; nor could he suspend his critical judgment to accommodate what George Orwell used to call "smelly little orthodoxies." This was not because Murray was a moral nihilist or libertine, as his wife and friends can testify. Indeed he properly pounced on those who were; and he scolded left-libertarians for inciting the federal government to inflict upon others acceptance of their own libertine brand of human rights. Murray was an explicit cultural and moral traditionalist who held no brief

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for "lifestyles," particularly if their advocates sought to impose their quirks as civil rights. He also expressed sympathy for the Catholic Right but was too much the individualist to yield even to clerical authorities he approved of.

His hatred for the present distorted American regime reflected the depth of his concerns about social morality and freedom. He knew in his bones that most public administrators and activist judges despised both. Such types were working, in the phrase of B. F. Skinner, to put us "beyond freedom and dignity," by destroying communal moral standards together with property rights.

In his judgments about our governing class, Murray was intuitively right but also willing to go beyond his gut feelings. He analyzed modern bureaucratic government by looking at its context; and he drew freely upon scholarship emanating from both sides of the political spectrum. Just about before anyone else, Murray perceived the collapse of "conservatives" and "liberals" into one largely indistinguishable blob; he understood that some reflective leftists, as opposed to liberal victimologists, might be more dependable than defenders of "democratic capitalism" in explaining this state of affairs. Like William Appleman Williams and Gore Vidal on the nonliberal Left, Murray was troubled by America's fall from a republic with strong local flavors into a wayward empire; and he felt a duty to oppose that development as well as to examine it.

In the sixties he was willing to abandon customary ideological labels by collaborating with New Leftists in a common front against an activist foreign policy. The perception behind this breaking of conservative ranks may have been more important than the less interesting lesson that came out of it, that Murray and his ephemeral allies were divided irrevocably on patriotic, cultural, and economic issues.

But what induced this desperate attempt at politics in a new key was Murray's sense of the downward course in American constitutional government. He came to believe, unlike the editor of *National Review*, that there is an intimate and perhaps indissoluble connection between America's growing empire and her march toward managerial serfdom, a.k.a. social democracy with a bureaucratic face.

Murray described the enemy quite pithily as the "welfare-warfare state," while observing its propensity to "call for perpetual war for the sake of perpetual peace." These positions once scandalized me, when I still marched in lockstep behind William Buckley, eventually to be satellized by the *Commentary* circle. The explanation provided for Murray's outbursts was his maverick inclination, which of course was a bad thing. All "movement conservatives" were then imitating the manners of the Comintern, pretending they were under orders from someone and reading *National Review* to learn about discipline. Ex-Communists were featured there who wished to lead us in a titanic struggle for world control against their old comrades; and as a test of party solidarity we were asked to accept a grim alliance with a metastasizing federal government and finally, with ambitious Mensheviks from Midtown Manhattan.

Though I still believe that our opposition to the Soviets was necessary and should even have come earlier, I also think that Murray was correct about the domestic price we paid for being a mobilized and crusading nation. Murray played a prophetic role by warning the Right not to sacrifice its dedication to distributed power and self-government to the exigencies of "world politics." Even before Robert Higgs wrote his magisterial volume on the ratcheting effects of wartime policies on the expansion of the American managerial state, Murray was demonstrating the same in his own studies and debates.

The unseemly use being made of his death to remind Americans of his lack of enthusiasm for the Cold War, in, among other publications, the onetime Communist-exculpating *New York Times*, ignores Murray's real service in the postwar years. He set an example of Old Right principle, as against those fashionable conservatives who begged the federal government to grab more power to fight foreign enemies. Murray, by contrast, never let us forget the cost of those theatrical gestures. He knew that power surrendered would not likely be reclaimed; and he was not surprised when by the end of the Cold War Truman–Kennedy Democrats had taken control of the American Right. He had predicted that turn of events which shocked me personally when I first learned of it, the new

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appreciation of the sensitized Right for the "democratic welfare state" and for the political vision of Martin Luther King, Jr. The Right, he insisted, had spent so long trying to win liberal acceptability while empowering the federal government to fight foreign wars that it had become indistinguishable from its putative opposite. Like most of Murray's bitter truths, this one too went largely unheeded.

Precisely because he shunned prescribed opinions, his scholarship remains compelling. Though an engaged economic libertarian and the closest student of Ludwig von Mises, Murray broke from his teacher on matters of ethical theory. He also used a Misesian analysis of economic cycles to produce an original and cogent study of the American Great Depression. For all his stated dislike of the "neoliberal-smear bund," Murray here too did more than go on the attack. He also did his level best to understand those historical forces that brought to power the gravediggers of the Old Right.

Contrary to the disparaging view of his Buckleyite and neocon detractors, Murray carried out this investigation with methodical care; and he showed insight in pointing out those changes in the political class that might account for the meteoric rise of the neocons as the official Right. Having studied more closely some of the same trends, I was struck not by Murray's justified venom but by the soundness of his intuition. He was usually on target in his comments about who was doing what to whom and why. His sarcastic and splenetic tone came from his moral idealism. Despite his preoccupation with historical trends, he also took seriously the part that individuals performed as participants in change. And he could never bring himself to forgive those who had neutered the Right as a critical force in the struggle against bureaucratic collectivism.

Like all of his friends, I learned a great deal from Murray, from his company and from his works. An attentive reading of the first and second editions of *The Conservative Movement* should reveal a huge interpretive difference; and much of it is attributable to the Rothbard factor. Murray made me comprehend that the slide toward Cold War liberalism and into global democratic triumphalism was not something incidental to postwar conservatism.

The neocons did not invade the postwar conservative movement; its leaders invited them to take it over. The only opponents of that takeover were beleaguered remnants of the prewar Right—and an isolated minority of the postwar Right which supported the Cold War but feared the further growth of the American welfare state. The surfacing of this interpretive line in the works of Sam Francis and Justin Raimondo as well as in my own attests the influence on all of us of our now departed friend.

I should finally note that Murray not only held nonpermissible views on everything under the sun, but never gave a rap about his prestige. He walked around in wrinkled clothes with his glasses askew, and he said what he thought, without caring about the status or financial holdings of those at whom he aimed the random products of his fertile mind.

As a dear friend of mine who met him only once said about Murray, "He is a real person, and that's hard to find!" It is therefore not surprising that those who are less than real people, particularly those who have spent their lives as social butterflies, should hate Murray passionately. It was he, unlike they, who turned his back on the Devil and did so not with conscious thought but with a childlike innocence of power. A critic of mass democracy, Murray was nonetheless thoroughly democratic in the way he dealt with others. Intellectual vitality and moral decency were the only qualities that gave a man standing in his eyes. His affection for early America was for a society which he thought still embodied his own virtues and simplicity. As a middle-aged scholar, Murray wrote volumes about the history and economics of another by now distant America conceived in liberty. By the end of his life he stood out among his generation in celebrating and personifying its republican virtues. ■

Alan Carlson

President
Rockford Institute

I knew of Murray Rothbard largely though the labels of his critics, until I came across an exchange on libertarianism between him and Russell Kirk. In one of his rare lesser performances, Kirk equated 'libertarian' and 'libertine,' dismissed the philosophy as socially corrosive, and specifically pointed to Roth-

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bard as an opponent of social order. Cast as something of a wild man, Rothbard responded in civil fashion. He argued that the modern state was, in fact, the greatest enemy of social order and organic community and that libertarianism, rightly understood, sought to preserve true civil society. He drew important distinctions between varieties of libertarian thought, and exhibited an impressive knowledge of American and global history. Rothbard, I concluded at the time (and with some surprise), had the better of that exchange.

Some years later, in 1989, an attempt to defend the institutional integrity of the Rockford Institute led to an open and nasty quarrel with a wing of New York neo-conservatism. While those of us directly involved reeled from cancelled foundation funding and vicious calumnies, Rothbard sent us—complete strangers—a letter of enthusiastic support. Along with other stalwarts of the authentic American right—Robert Nisbet, M. E. Bradford, and (yes) Russell Kirk—he instinctively understood the deeper issues in the dispute, and stood squarely behind us.

We began a modest correspondence, and met the following November. I was repeatedly surprised by the intellectual curiosity and the unpredictability of this reputed "ideologue." For example, we discovered to our mutual delight that—in independent breaks with the "official" right—we both had opposed the Tax Reform Act of 1986 and the "flat tax" philosophy behind it. As he wrote to me, the effort to "close the [tax] loopholes" and to distribute the tax burden "fairly" were "egalitarian and Jacobinical." He continued:

> such people...would regard your proposal of a tax credit per child...as illegitimate "social engineering." In my view, however, it is neither illegitimate nor social engineering to allow people to keep more of their hard earned money; so, bravo for your proposal. Tax credits are also far superior to the Chicago School voucher schemes, since child care or education or whatever are taken out of the tax system, instead of being loaded into it.

Tax "loopholes," we agreed, were better labelled "zones of liberty," places where families might shelter their possessions from a grasping state resting on a corrupt income tax law.

With Murray Rothbard, I shared deep apprehension over the distortions of American social life introduced by the Cold War, and I learned much from him regarding the mutually reinforcing aspects of the "welfare-warfare state." While we differed on certain baseline philosophical premises, I learned from him to respect classical libertarianism as a valued and authentic counterforce to the mega-state swelling in Washington. He taught me lessons I will never forget about the true identity of the old American republic, and about the nature of a regime of liberty.

Again with the other giants of the authentic 20th century American right (specifically Bradford, Kirk, and Nisbet), Rothbard refused to be ideologically defined (and confined) by foundation executives or self-appointed leaders of "the Movement." He cherished his intellectual independence, loved a good debate, refused to compromise his principles for hard cash, and remained true to the America that he loved.

I consider it a privilege to have known Murray Rothbard. He will be sorely missed. ■

Robert Higgs

Research Director
Independent Institute

Murray Rothbard's scholarship spanned an enormous range, including philosophy, methodology, economic theory, the history of economic and political thought, economic history, economic policy, law, and contemporary politics. I was well along in my career as an economist specializing in the economic history of the United States when I began to read his work. Once started, I never stopped.

The first thing I can recall reading, soon after its publication in 1978, was the revised edition of *For a New Liberty*. Having already absorbed a good deal of the work of Milton Friedman, Friedrich Hayek, and other free-market economists, I found much of this manifesto congenial, although I balked at the possibility of dispensing with government even for the provision of national defense and courts of justice. I spent many hours over lunches with my friend Andy Rutten chewing on Murray's ideas about how and why anarcho-capitalism would work.

In the following years I read a great deal of Murray's work, although I am sure that even now I've only scratched the surface of his ouevre. Among the works that I have found especially valuable in my own research are his two chapters, "War Collectivism in World War I" and "Herbert

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Hoover and the Myth of Laissez-Faire," in *A New History of Leviathan*, published in 1972. My own book on the American leviathan contains several references to Murray's essays, but probably does not reveal my full debt to those seminal chapters.

My closest encounter with Rothbard the economic historian, however, came off the record. Early in 1985 I submitted to the Pacific Research Institute a manuscript that, after several more revisions and some additions, was eventually published as *Crisis and Leviathan* by Oxford University Press in 1987. Pacific asked several eminent scholars, including Murray, to review my manuscript. Murray's review went far beyond what one might have expected, taking the form of a letter to Pacific's Greg Christiansen, dated May 27, 1985. It runs 26 single-spaced pages, probably over 12,000 words. Over the years, I have seen a lot of reports by referees and reviewers, but never anything that came close to this remarkable epistle.

The letter began with two pages of praise for my manuscript. Murray liked my general approach. "Perhaps without realizing," he wrote, "Professor Higgs approaches history from the Misesian–praxeological viewpoint, knowing and applying the truths and laws of economics, but also realizing that ideological and other factors are also of crucial importance." He appreciated what he described as my "critiques of Chicagoite cliometrics and public choicy history—both of which try to sum up all of history with a few equations, or with a one-dimensional simplistic approach."

Murray lauded my work for not being value-free."We have suffered for too long," he wrote, "from a dichotomy in which essayists and pamphleteers, who are unscholarly, are hard-hitting and value-laden whereas scholars are evasive, garbled writers who hide behind a careful cloak of value-freedom." He delighted that I was "calling a spade a spade and not a 'triangular implement for digging.'"

He declared that "Higgs's values are my values," applauding my realization that war and militarism are "the major cause and embodiment of intervention" in the market and the suppression of liberty and free enterprise. My hostility to conscription and my natural-rights objection to it—as opposed to a neoclassical efficiency objection—pleased him mightily. My comments on the gold standard garnered his approval, too.

Had I stopped reading after the first two pages, I might have considered myself a certified damned fine scholar. Any such temptation, however, was decisively punctured by the next 24 pages. These contained a minutely detailed yet broad-ranging critique, along with scores of suggestions for what needed to be added to my text and what additional books, articles, and dissertations I needed to read to correct my misapprehensions and flesh out my knowledge. At several points, Murray prefaced his criticism by noting, "Professor Higgs is nodding here."

I can still recall the deflated feeling I had after finishing the letter. I knew that I did not have sufficient life expectancy to accomplish what Murray had indicated needed to be done. Sad to say, I couldn't read that much in a decade, even if I did nothing else, much less incorporate all of it into a coherent book. Never before had I been shown my inadequacies as a scholar in such a well-documented way—after all, even the pathetic manuscript Murray was flogging had taken me five years to draft and rested to some extent on twenty years of study and research.

We are not all destined for greatness. I made a number of revisions of my text and my footnotes along the lines suggested in Murray's letter. Needless to say, I was not able to follow up on the great majority of his suggestions, and I have no doubt that my book was the worse for that inability. All I can say in my own defense is that the book, such as it is, did get finished and published in my lifetime. And my luck held. When Murray reviewed the book for *Liberty* magazine in 1987, he praised it extravagantly, breathing not a word about the shortcomings he had spent 24 pages detailing in a private communication written mainly for my benefit.

Murray's letter included a number of magnificent epigrams. To readers who had the wonderful opportunity to listen to Murray's lectures on economic history, as I did at several of the Mises Institute's summer programs, these will have a familiar ring. Here are a few of them.

On the nature of the state: "The State has its own agenda, that is,...all States everywhere are

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run by a ruling class, the people running the State, and one of their interests is to extend as well as maintain the power and wealth arising from that rule."

On intellectuals as servants of power: "Since...the existence of any State regime rests on public opinion, it becomes important for the State to engineer that opinion with the aid of the professional opinion-moulding group: the intellectuals. This cozy coalition benefits the State rulers—kings, nobles, political parties, whatever—because the public is persuaded to obey the king or State; the intellectuals benefit from a share in the tax revenue, plus their 'market' being guaranteed by the government."

On hope for the dissolution of statist regimes: "The situation is not irreversible.... [G]overnment intervention is beset by 'inner contradictions,'...breakdowns are inevitable and are coming faster in response to the stimulus of intervention—here the rational expectations people have some good points. Progressive and synergistic breakdowns in domestic and foreign intervention might lead to crises and fairly rapid and even sudden reversions to freedom. Note, for example, the remarkable, even if gradual, shift from Stalinism to free markets in Yugoslavia, the developing shift out of Maoism in China, and at least the public sentiments if not the reality underlying conservative regimes in the U.S. and England, growth in free-market and libertarian views in Western Europe, etc. And remember that the public choicers are wrong that revolutions can never occur."

These characteristic sentiments exemplify Murray's unflagging optimism. More than once he observed that my prognosis was "too pessimistic." Well, temperament is tough to slough off. I doubt that I shall ever acquire Murray's optimism, which I believe goes far to explain how he was able to keep slugging away until the day he died, always convinced that eventually those who favor a free society will win the great struggle.

It is not likely that we shall ever have another scholar of Murray's breadth. In his letter he referred to well over a hundred sources, many by exact author, title, publication date and publisher, even though he apologized for "not having access to the bulk of my books here in Las Vegas, nor to any decent library, so I will have to wing the citations from time to time." The references include many obscure or exotic books and articles (e.g., Etienne de La Boetie, *Discourse on Voluntary Servitude*; Alfred De Grazia, ed., *The Velikovsky Affair*; Colin Simpson, *The Lusitania Affair*; Eugene N. Golob, *The Isms*; and R. Palme Dutt, *Fascism and Social Revolution*).

Murray also had extensive knowledge of the religious history of the United States, upon which he expounded with great gusto in his historical lectures, in which the diabolical doings of the postmillenial pietists figured prominently.

Many of us may remember Murray most fondly for his fabulous sense of humor. He was a truly entertaining conversationalist and lecturer, and his letters contained priceless witticisms and hilarious descriptions. In the letter I've been quoting, he told the following "lovely—and true!—story about one of the great social philosophers of our century, W. C. Fields. Fields was asked, among other celebrities, by the *Saturday Evening Post*, during World War II, to write a plan about how to end the war. W. C. sat down, quite seriously, and proposed his plan, which was to get the leaders of the warring nations together, bring them to the Hollywood Bowl, and 'let them fight it out with sackfuls of dung.' Needless to say, the *SEP* did not publish the article."

I was honored to know Murray Rothbard and privileged to work with him in a number of conferences and programs organized by the Mises Institute. I hold him to have been one of our century's great intellectual figures, whose neglect by mainstream academicians is inexcusable. He stimulated my thinking and enlarged my knowledge. My personal association with him brought me much pleasure. I do not expect to encounter another like him, and his passing grieves me greatly. ■

David Gordon

Senior Fellow
Ludwig von Mises Institute

One of the greatest joys of my life was listening to Murray Rothbard. A conversation with him might take you anywhere. The last time I spoke to him, about a week before he died, he talked about a problem in Schumpeter's economic theory, a recent book on Jewish theology, the fallacies in philosophical defense of back-

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wards causation, the O. J. Simpson case, and Hegel's relation to the tradition of German mysticism. On every topic, he had illuminating things to say, all delivered in his rapid voice, accompanied by that unmistakable laugh.

Murray could grasp the essentials of an argument as fast as anyone I have ever met and at once bring to bear on whatever the point at issue his immense learning. On one occasion three years ago I had to give a joint seminar with him at the Ludwig von Mises University summer program. He had just read an article by Milton Friedman, highly critical of Mises, which he viewed with less than complete enthusiasm. He proposed to devote the seminar to an analysis of the article and, with barely a pause for breath, demolished each paragraph of the piece. Another year, he began his seminar with a brilliant hour-long discussion of political power that ranged from Lao-tse through Hobbes and Locke to the public choice school.

His books resembled his conversation: they were packed with matter, as if he could not wait to convey to his readers the results of his prodigious reading. His *Man, Economy, and State* ranks as one of the foremost works of 20th-century economics, in the opinion of two judges of no mean caliber—Ludwig von Mises and Henry Hazlitt.

The two volumes of his *History of Economic Thought* which, sadly, he did not live to see in print, show that he was a great intellectual historian as well as a great economist.

Murray Rothbard was my friend for sixteen years. I find it hard to believe that I can no longer give him a call, to ask him about a new book and to experience his never-failing warmth and kindness. "I shall not look upon his like again." ■

Burton S. Blumert

President
Center for Libertarian Studies

It was the late 1960s and I was a struggling entrepreneur in a brand-new industry for the United States. I was a gold dealer. Gold had been demonetized thirty years earlier and as certain governmental trading restrictions were lifted, it was as if a new element had been found in nature.

American banks and brokerage houses knew nothing on the subject and I embarked on a crash program to learn the history and economic theory of the "new" commodity. I ran through the roster of Hard Money luminaries: Harry Brown, Jerome Smith, Robert Preston, Harry Schultz, and in the area of political theory, Morris and Linda Tannehill.

And then I stumbled upon Murray N. Rothbard. No more middlemen needed to apply. I devoured everything of Murray's I could find and comprehend: *What Has Government Done to Our Money?*, *America's Great Depression*, and *The Case for a 100% Gold Dollar*. *Man, Economy, and State* and the more scholarly papers would come later, but *Power and Market* had a tremendous influence on me, and although I didn't realize it at the time I was destined to be a lifelong Rothbardian.

Then I met the great man. Murray and Joey were spending a summer in the San Francisco Bay Area. At that time Murray did not often venture far from New York City. He was speaking at the Olympic Club and after his dazzling presentation, I built up sufficient nerve to introduce myself. It was like a ten-year-old kid meeting Mickey Mantle.

Could this cherubic, funny, warm man possess the encyclopedic bear-trap of a mind I had encountered in his writings? You bet!

I was too nervous to retain much of what we talked about, but several weeks later Joey invited me to dinner at their apartment in Palo Alto. Thus began one of the most important relationships in my life: my friendship with Murray and Joey Rothbard.

Some say the measure of a man's life is the mark he makes for his time, and I suppose I have made a tiny, tiny impression as a precious metals dealer, but my most singular identity is as a Rothbardian. This suits me fine! Only a handful of people make a contribution for the ages; Murray N. Rothbard is one of those cherished few, and I was graced to be close to him.

Can you imagine the honor to actually play a role in publishing a portion of Murray's unbelievable output; to have the pleasure of seeing a Rothbardian first draft and shake your head in wonderment at his craft and invention?

Economist, historian, essayist, political observer, and true patriot, an "American original" as Tom Fleming noted, Murray is gone but his power remains all about us. He is the beacon and the

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model, and for as long as the printed word is available, there will be endless generations of Rothbardians. ■

Justin Raimondo

Author, *Reclaiming the American Right*

I met Murray Rothbard in 1978. It was the heyday of what we called, half-affectionately, the "Kochtopus": the network of thinktanks and activist groups financed by the libertarian multi-billionaire, Charles Koch. Although now firmly ensconced in Washington, D.C., back in the days of its dewy innocence, the Koch-financed Cato Institute was headquartered in San Francisco. Murray was a co-founder and resident scholar in Cato's sleek offices. I was down the street in a rather funky converted warehouse, which housed the satellite institutions financed by Koch and run by his overseer, Ed Crane, the president of Cato: *Libertarian Review*, under the editorship of Roy A Childs, Jr.; the Libertarian Party of California, with Bob Costello in charge; and Students for a Libertarian Society, with no one in charge.

At first, there wasn't much interaction between the Cato crowd and us. The Catoites paid an occasional visit, usually to chat with Roy, but most kept a cool distance between themselves and us activist types. Murray was always very genial, but he seemed distracted, preoccupied with the mysterious inner workings of the Kochotopus's top leadership. We were kids, barely out of our twenties, and here was Murray Rothbard, who had for all intents and purposes founded the modern libertarian movement in his living room. We were in awe of him.

It wasn't long before rumors of a titanic struggle between Rothbard and Ed Crane, the Trotsky and Stalin of the libertarian revolution, filtered down to us, mostly through Roy Childs. But Roy had his own unique "spin" on things, and we weren't yet clear about what was really going on.

Then, one day, I received from Murray a commentary on the first issue of our Libertarian Party newsletter, which I wrote and edited in collaboration with a loosely-organized group of self-styled "radicals." Looking past the bombast, Murray saw a genuine attempt to cohere a consistently radical libertarianism. He saw through the crude sloganeering to our essential insight: that the leadership of the LP was intent on selling out. He had come to the same conclusions about the LP leadership long before us, was delighted to find some allies close at hand—and more than glad to educate us on the question of just who they were selling out to.

As I recall, he was charmed by our talk of the need to develop "cadre," and particularly our interest in matters of strategy. Murray wrote constantly on the subject of strategy over the years, patiently explaining to libertarians the pitfalls of opportunism, the perils of sectarianism, and always, with characteristic optimism, pointing the way forward.

In his letter to me, Murray proposed that we join forces and work to stem the rising tide of opportunism in the LP. This was so characteristic of Murray—to put himself on the same level as a 20-something year-old punk. There was, in him, none of the self-importance affected by those who aspire to "greatness," but only the natural benevolence of the truly great.

There then followed a political relationship and growing personal friendship in which I had the privilege of learning from one of the greatest minds of this century. Not that I appreciated or even knew of this gift at the time. Being a young neo-Randian 1970s-style libertarian, who thought he knew everything, I hadn't the faintest inkling of the sheer value of Rothbard. I merely took it for granted that the greatest of libertarian theoreticians should make common cause with a smartmouthed, half-educated kid and his would-be "revolutionary" friends. And yet this giant, who recognized the value and importance of libertarian youth groups, undertook the often thankless task of educating us.

In the end we all looked to Murray for the basics, the framework. He was our anchor, strictly cleaving to libertarian principle, unafraid of controversy, a wellspring of knowledge and experience that overflowed and nourished us all.

Unlike the caricature of an intellectual, who is supposed to stay in his ivory tower, Murray plunged happily into the nitty-gritty of rock 'em, sock 'em politics. An expert delegate-counter, and faction-fighter par excellence, Murray accomplished the seemingly impossible task of making a Liber-

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tarian Party convention seem like fun.

At first, the Radical Caucus was thought of as a small and rather exotic minority; all our carping and theoretical objections looked like hair-splitting as the Kochs lavished their seemingly limitless wealth on the 1980 LP presidential campaign of Ed Clark. They put Koch brother David on the ticket as Vice Presidential candidate in order to get around the limitations on campaign contributions: with the shy and eccentric David kept in the background as much as possible, the money spigot was wide open.

The Party was supposedly making giant strides toward liberty, and we were viewed as little more than noisome cranks. But then Ed Clark spilled the beans on national television: in a "Nightline" interview he told Ted Koppel that libertarianism is "low-tax liberalism"—and Murray's basic critique of the Cato crowd as opportunists was confirmed. "All they care about," thundered Murray, "is finding some plausible libertarian-sounding rationale for a position which will suck in the votes and support of the media and the media-oriented constituency." This constituency consisted, he said, of "young middle class liberals, the sort of people who read the *New York Times* and watch 'CBS News,'" and "better yet...the sort of people who write the *New York Times* and make 'CBS News.'"

This prognosis was deadly accurate. After breaking with Murray who had even named the institute, and gypping him out of his shares of Cato stock, the Catoites left the LP in a group. They also packed their bags and moved their whole operation out of the Bay Area. Having decided to toady up to Power, they naturally chose Washington, D.C., as their new home. After flirting with the "centrist" party set up by independent presidential candidate John Anderson, they turned Cato into the Left-libertarian wing of the Beltway crowd, still doggedly pursuing their strategy of converting the ruling elite to libertarianism.

This was the real source of the quarrel between Murray and what we delighted in calling the Crane Machine, not only a difference over strategy, but very different styles. The haughty aloofness of Cato's corporate culture was the exact opposite of Murray's own outgoing style and populist personality. Murray wanted to build a real grassroots movement, an idea that appealed to such young radicals as myself. We were put off by the cynicism of Crane and Koch, who thought they could make a revolution with smoke and mirrors and a lot of cash.

The November Revolution, populist to the core, confirms the correctness of Murray's strategic vision. Also confirmed is his jaundiced view of Cato. Today, the Cato Institute is known in Washington as the great defender of Nafta and gay rights—not necessarily in that order. Very early on, Murray saw where Cato was headed, and, although he had the most to lose in terms of position, power, money, and prestige, he never even considered these factors when there was an issue of principle at stake.

When the Cold War ended, and the great opening on the Right afforded libertarians the kind of opportunity that comes only once, Murray was the first to recognize it. At the same time, he had grown tired of the smalltime quackery of LP politics, which had degenerated into a New Age-countercultural funny farm.

Around this time I read the manuscript of *The Betrayal of the American Right*, Murray's colorful and fascinating account of the Old Right: it had a profound effect on my evolving political outlook. I came upon this unpublished work by accident, rummaging through Roy Childs' bookshelves, a few months before Roy's death, and had only a brief time to glance at this forgotten treasure, as Roy would not part with his copy. I remember Roy telling me that he had mentioned the manuscript to Murray, who at first could not quite recall it: "Imagine the sheer productivity of someone who cannot quite remember writing a 200-page book," exclaimed Roy. "He just forgot about it!"

Murray was good enough to lend me his copy of the manuscript, which I read at a single sitting, and have since reread many times. In the book, written in the early 1970s, Murray recalls the pre-WWII Right of Garet Garrett and John T. Flynn, the America First Committee and the Taft wing of the Republican party; such forgotten heroes as Frank Chodorov, and Colonel Robert R. McCormick, and such long-neglected causes as the Bricker Amendment are resurrected and given the honor that is their due. Written, in part, in the form of a memoir, *The Betrayal of the American Right* tells the real

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history of the conservative movement from one who knew, firsthand, many of the figures and movements he wrote about.

Murray taught me many things over the years, but perhaps his greatest intellectual gift was this. The reading of this work immediately put everything in perspective. Inspired by Murray, I wrote *Reclaiming the American Right: The Lost Legacy of the Conservative Movement.*

Murray was virtually the last living link between the America First generation of Old Right conservatives, and the libertarian and conservative movements of today. But that legacy is, thanks to him, far from lost. His death marks the passing of the second generation of Old Right libertarians that came of age in the postwar world, but a third is even now rising to claim its legacy.

The process was well-advanced in the last years of Murray's life: the formation of the John Randolph Club, the phenomenal growth of the *Rothbard-Rockwell Report,* the Buchanan for President campaign, which Murray fully supported, the success of the Ludwig von Mises Institute, where he headed academic affairs—these are all signs that his ideas, the program of what had been a "party of one," as Tom Fleming put it, are finally receiving the attention they deserve.

In the scale of things, Rothbard is in a class with a very few others, giants whose shadows we live in: on this level, only his mentor, Ludwig von Mises, comes to mind. But he has no real equivalent, even in this exalted company: for Mises was a specialist, the purest of theoreticians, while Murray was a true polymath. The sheer range of his knowledge and interests is astounding; in 25 books and thousands of articles, his writings encompass not only economics, philosophy, ethics, and history, but also political journalism, fire-and-brimstone polemics, a book-length "memo" on libertarian strategy and tactics, and the movie reviews of " First Nighter."

The only comparable figure is on the Left: Karl Marx. While in one sense (the most obvious), Rothbard is the intellectual antipode of Marx, in a broader sense the similarities are significant. Like old Karl, Murray was a system-builder who spent his life constructing an intellectual edifice of monumental proportions. Also like Marx, who helped found the First (Communist) International, Murray was an activist, who thrived on being in the thick of battle.

Most importantly, by the sheer volume and range of his writings, and their near-completeness as a system, Rothbard's works, like the writings of Marx, will inspire men to action. One day, Rothbardianism will be far more commonplace than Marxism of any variety; the label, Rothbardian, will be instantly recognized, not only for its ideological content, but also for a certain style: the joyous radicalism of Rothbard, the happy warrior of liberty, who got more radical and irreverent as he got older.

Both Marx and Rothbard were alike in that neither was recognized in their own lifetimes; Marx lived in the meanest poverty nearly all his life, dependent on the charity of his few followers. Rothbard suffered a similar neglect: like his mentor, Ludwig von Mises, Murray Rothbard was locked out of the cushy academic positions routinely awarded to statist mediocrities.

But the difference in their reactions to being cast in the role of the outsider is instructive: Marx was overwhelmed by his own irascibility and ended his life a bitter, defeated old man. Murray was certainly irascible—a characteristic that often seems to go along with genius—but he was also an optimist, convinced to the end that pessimism about the future of liberty is due to "a misreading of history."

We mourn Murray N. Rothbard's death; but, in true Rothbardian style, we do not fall into the error of pessimism and despair. We go forth into battle with a renewed sense of meaning, of purpose, of tenacity, confident that we can and will live up to Murray's great expectations—that we can and will make history.

Samuel Francis

Syndicated Columnist
The Washington Times

I grew up in a communist culture," wrote Murray Rothbard in a personal memoir published in the Rockford Institute's magazine *Chronicles* last August. "The middle-class Jews in New York whom I lived among, whether family, friends, or neighbors, were either communists or fellow-travelers in the communist orbit. I had two sets of Communist Party uncles and aunts, on both sides of my fami-

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ly."

It tells you a good deal about Murray that from the time of his childhood in the pit of the major superstition of this century until his death last week, at 68, in the city where he was born and raised—he showed not the slightest sympathy for socialist mythology or the smallest inclination to mask his own affirmation of freedom. "I was a right-winger and bitterly anti-socialist from the very beginning."

By the time of his death, Rothbard was the foremost libertarian thinker and activist of his age, leaving behind some 25 volumes in economics, history, and political and social philosophy, and probably thousands of articles, essays, editorials and speeches. But it is not mainly that legacy for which his friends and comrades will remember him. What carried Murray through his childhood immersion in a communist culture and bore him through the hundred political and ideological battles of his life was his own character. It was impossible to know him for long without recognizing the moral iron beneath his flesh.

"In one family gathering featuring endless pledges of devotion to 'Loyalist' Spain during the Civil War," he wrote, "I piped up, at the age of 11 or 12, 'What's wrong with Franco, anyway?' It didn't seem to me that Franco's sins, however statist, were any worse, to put it mildly, than those of the [Spanish] Republicans. My query was a conversation-stopper, all right, but I never received an answer."

It was Murray's destiny to stop conversations, not because he sought to put himself on stage but simply because he wanted, above all else, a straight answer, and the cant of neither the left nor the establishment right could give him that. Hence, he enlisted in what he and others have come to call the Old Right gathered around the original opponents of the New Deal and the foes of foreign intervention in the 1930s.

It was these, led by Charles Lindbergh, Col. Robert McCormick of the *Chicago Tribune*, and Senator Robert A. Taft, to whom he was an adviser, who best represented what Rothbard believed was the real American tradition of small and limited government at home and an America First foreign policy abroad. As a graduate student at Columbia in the late 1940s, Murray signed up with Students for Thurmond, a group that included "one New York Jew, myself."

"I have been asked many times," Murray wrote in *Chronicles*, "whether the Old Right was rife with anti-Semitism.... The answer to this question is a resounding No. In my decade on the Old Right, I never once encountered any anti-Semitic hostility." The smear haunts Old Rightists to this day and continues to be trotted out whenever their enemies—on the left or the right—lose another argument.

For Murray and his comrades, then and now, the great enemy was always what he called the "welfare-warfare state," the leviathan constructed by the Progressives, Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt and inherited and conserved by whatever Republican happened to capture it. Murray had no use for what he liked to call the "official conservative movement" centered around *National Review*, which he described as setting out "to transform the American right from an isolationist defender of the Old Republic to a global crusader against the Soviet Union and international communism."

I have to say that I never agreed with Murray's view of the Cold War—he never believed the Soviets were a threat to the United States—but in the aftermath of the collapse of communism, the crusade for global management continues. We both opposed the Gulf War and subsequent sallies into Somalia and Haiti as efforts to keep the warfare side of the welfare state in business.

Nor did Murray entertain many illusions about the "Republican Revolution" that is now upon us. The last article he published in his lifetime was a piece in the *Washington Post* titled "Newt Gingrich is no libertarian." Even before Gingrich began saluting the New Deal, Murray was not disposed to optimism.

And yet his optimism—and his instinct for combat—was irrepressible. Exactly three years ago, in an address to the John Randolph Club, of which he was co-founder and co-president, he prophesied the end of the welfare-warfare state. It is a lie, he proclaimed, that the clock cannot be turned back.

"We shall break the clock of social democracy," he thundered. "We shall break the clock of the Great Society. We shall break the clock of the wel-

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fare state. We shall break the clock of the New Deal. We shall break the clock of Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom and perpetual war. We *shall* repeal the 20th century."

That stopped a conversation or two, you can bet, and it's as straight an answer as you could want. We haven't done it yet, but Murray was right that we can and we will. And when we do, this brave and brilliant man of iron will be with us. ■

(Reprinted from the *Washington Times*, January 13, 1995).

Yuri Maltsev

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"There is no way that we can fully comprehend why one man trims his sails to the prevailing winds, why he 'goes along to get along' in the infamous phrase, while another will pursue and champion the truth regardless of cost."

— Murray N. Rothbard

My first meeting with Murray Rothbard took place at the Ludwig von Mises University at Stanford in the summer of 1990. It was an unforgettable experience; the genius of Murray Rothbard was magnetic, his love of life and people striking, his energy captivating, his humor salient. I remember every word of our discussions on what was happening in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

At that point I had already spent over half a year in the United States and met with many economists. So, as usual, I was prepared to "inform" Dr. Rothbard on major economic and political developments in the Soviet Union. It turned out otherwise—his deep insights into what was really happening there were much more sound than my own shallow observations. His knowledge of Russian and European history was astounding.

This first meeting with Murray impressed me so much that I remember and enjoy reminiscences of every second of it. In my subsequent development as an Austrian economist, I owe much of my perceptions and intuition to this exposure to Rothbard's genius. A thorough reading of *Man, Economy, and State*, *Power and Market*, and *America's Great Depression* not only taught me sound Misesian theory, but also "inoculated" me against the trivia of "mainstream" economic vulgarity.

Every meeting with Murray would be a jollity of free thought, unexpected discoveries and revelations, exciting manifestations of his genius. While living in Washington, most of my friends were big-government conservatives and imperialists. So, especially refreshing and libertarian for me were Murray's views on military and security policy.

Considering war (along with murder, assault, robbery and slavery) an "invasive action" giving way to "violent or hegemonic regimes," Rothbard regarded himself as a member of the pre-1950s Old Right, rejecting the "globaloney" of the welfare-warfare national security state. He actively opposed all overseas adventures of both the Bush and Clinton administrations. It was a courageous position in the chauvinistic atmosphere of the Gulf War, as well as in the "compassionate hysteria" accompanying the beginning of Somalia's disaster.

Murray was the first to point out to me that, irrespective of what the ideologues of both parties would say, there were no winners in the Cold War, only losers; that the most ferocious assault on liberty was justified by the ruling elite in the name of the "Soviet threat."

Yet he was unquestionably the most ardent advocate of liberty in this century and did more damage to the cause of socialism than anyone among living Western intellectuals. Following his teacher, Ludwig von Mises, he exposed socialism and its different disguises (from Nazism to modern and fashionable social movements) as a violent chaos and a "centrally prohibited economy."

Rothbard's insights would uncover the deep and imminent connections between the warfare and the welfare state. They are two sides of the same coin: both encroach on our liberties, and stealthily undermine the freedom of market exchanges. For Rothbard, peace might mean an end to the intrusive "totalitarian bureaucracy" that William F. Buckley, and his neocon allies, deemed necessary to fight the Soviet threat.

With the spectacular collapse of communism, which was caused not by the Pentagon, CIA, or National Security Council, but by the "absence of the means for economic calculation," we see the same people fabricating new "threats" coming from places like Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia, etc. And the same people are behind the bailout of bankrupt and corrupt Mexican and Russian

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statism and socialism, strengthening the executive branch of our own government, dumping taxpayers dollars on financially and ideologically impoverished public broadcasting and national endowments.

Rothbard was the only visible thinker of the West who saw, and had the courage to expose, the dangers of the warfare state to our liberties which would inevitably diminish with every war, either "hot" or "cold." The growth of militarism necessarily meant the growth of bureaucracy, expansion of government functions, justification of increased government spending, and the consequent rise of the anticapitalist mentality. In his immortal *Man, Economy, and State* he wrote: "In wartime, precisely when it would seem most urgent to preserve an efficient productive system, the cry invariably goes up for 'taking the profits out of war.'" (p. 806) Only peace and the absence of the mobilization mentality might mean an end to the "totalitarian bureaucracy," intrusive government, and social planning and engineering.

The legacy of Murray Rothbard will find its true place in the history of philosophy and economic thought. His impact on ideas of this century was enormous and comparable only with the contributions of his cherished teacher—Ludwig von Mises. A man of extraordinary intellectual and creative power, he left us with the treasures of his writings, as well as the experience of being at his side, and will be remembered by all of us—his students—as a champion of liberty, uncompromising thinker, excellent educator, and warm and loving human being. ■

Gary North

President, Institute for Christian Economics

Murray Rothbard achieved what every great thinker and a lot of not-so-great thinkers aspire to: he created a body of work that captured the minds of thousands of bright people, leaving behind disciples and colleagues who can extend his work into the future. If they don't, Murray isn't to blame.

In many areas of economic theory, he extended the work of Ludwig von Mises. In other areas, he abandoned it. Murray was not a Mises clone; he was an innovator who stood on the shoulders of a giant. His example serves as a good and proper legacy; it reminds his own successors that intellectual advances begin with productive shoulder-climbing. He was never sparing in his use of footnotes.

Mises fought the rhetorical wars of another continent and an earlier generation—really two earlier generations. He was trying to convince European socialists of the folly of their ways, while Murray was trying to convince American Keynesians of the same thing. The collapse of the European Marxist states in the late 1980s gained Mises at least occasional grudging though belated credit for having been correct. I suppose it will take a similar economic breakdown to gain Murray his recognition. (Fortunately for his reputation, we have legions of bureaucrats working night and day—or at least mornings—to achieve this goal).

I was one of those who benefitted greatly from his efforts, beginning in the summer of 1963 when I read all of his published works and dozens of his incisive and trenchant book reviews that were gathering dust in the files of the William Volker Fund. My experience was not unique. The Vietnam war and its domestic repercussions created a market for at least parts of Murray's anti-establishment outlook. The skepticism engendered by that war regarding the modern warfare state spilled over into the thinking of a generation of libertarian recruits, creating skepticism about the welfare state. They began to see a faint sign stamped beneath every Great Society welfare proposal: "From the wonderful folks who gave us the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution."

Murray always had a resource-allocation problem: his curiosity was as comprehensive as his worldview, but his time was limited. By 1963, he had grown discontented with economic analysis as an end in itself. But he never grew discontented with unconventional ideas. After 1965, he devoted more and more of his time to politics, at first actively (Libertarian Party), then analytically. His major piece in the *RRR* in the month of his death was a detailed analysis of why New York Governor Mario Cuomo lost. As I read it, two weeks after he died, I marveled. How did he know all this inside stuff? And who will we find who matches him?

Throughout his career, he continued to read voraciously in the

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area of American revisionist history. His four-volume history of colonial America, *Conceived in Liberty*, never received the recognition it deserved, either in conservative circles (it was too libertarian) or professional historical circles (it was too libertarian). His notes for the long-missing fifth volume are entombed in a now-defunct technology: a voice recorder system for which no playback machine exists. He ended his career with his magnum opus on the history of economic thought, which includes far more historical insights than anyone ever receives in standard histories of economic thought. He did not make the fatal assumption of previous historians of economic thought—incarnated by George Stigler—that (paraphrasing Robert Nisbet) ideas marry and have little ideas, nor the equally fatal assumption of establishment historians that social forces breed in the same way.

Murray was consistent. I have never met anyone who was more consistent. He began with the axioms of human action in Mises's epistemology, and he followed them. This consistency placed him outside the universe of acceptable academic discourse. Limited government? Not sufficient: no civil government! History as the result of key men in history? Not sufficient: the conspiracy view of history! It is men, their ideas, their personal leadership, and their money that shapes history, he concluded—not vast impersonal social forces.

He believed in the conspiracy view of history for the same reason that he believed in Mises's individualistic epistemology: he held that human action shapes history. Behind every great historical movement, he knew, there is at least one self-interested group trying to get ahead, all too often by means of the rhetoric of public benefit through state action. He had one adjective to describe all those who invoke state power to extend their own rent-seeking hidden agendas: monstrous.

He did not advocate libertinism in the name of libertarianism. He was the husband of one wife. He understood that widespread antinomian self-indulgence will eventually produce a social catastrophe. He believed deeply that a society without civil government must rest heavily on self-government, and that self-government is not a powerful personal motivation in a person who is debauched sexually, chemically, or both. Over the years, this opinion lost him many early libertarian supporters.

His life stands as a testimony to his personalistic view of history. He never had much money, but he surely had ideas. His leadership consisted of his infectious laugh, his enormous learning, and his ability to crank out great stuff frequently and good stuff continually. Never did he write a boring essay. In a century, someone will be reading his writings for pure enjoyment. this will not be true of the latest issue of the *American Economic Review*.

From his earliest unpublished but magnificent book review to his latest movie review in *RRR*, he maintained one theme: men are responsible for their actions, and a state that tries to remove this responsibility through coercive action should not be trusted. ■

Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.

Editor, *RRR*

Give me a short description of his thought and contributions," said the reporter when free-market giant Murray N. Rothbard died at 68. But how do you sum up Beethoven's music or Dante's poetry?

In 45 years of teaching and writing, Rothbard produced 25 books, thousands of articles, and three generations of students. He was a teacher who never stopped learning, an intellectual prize fighter who always punched cleanly. At once a genius and a gentleman, his causes were honesty in scholarship, truth in history, principle in politics, and—first and foremost—human liberty itself.

Filled with laughter and principled beyond measure, Rothbard rejected the compromises and pretensions of the modern world. He was unaffected by intellectual fashion, undeterred by attacks, and untempted by opportunism. Quite simply, nothing stopped him. And as the Happy Warrior of economics, as *Forbes* called him, he made singular contributions to banking history, price theory, monopoly and antitrust, and business cycles, to name just a few areas.

If there were justice in this world, he would have received the Nobel Prize. Indeed, a consortium of European scholars nominated him in December 1994.Rothbard never got the recognition he deserved, but truth and principle were always

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more important to him than money and prestige.

For many years, he taught economics at Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute, working in a dingy, windowless office on the fifth floor, surrounded by Marxists. He never once complained, except to wonder why an engineering school couldn't make the elevator work. His admirers celebrated his appointment as the S. J. Hall Distinguished Professor of Economics at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Volumes one and two of Rothbard's history of economic thought appear this month. Published by Edward Elgar, it is the most important work of its kind since Joseph Schumpeter. And this spring, a two-volume compilation of his important economic articles, totaling more than 1,000 pages, will appear in Elgar's "Economists of the 20th Century" series (Mark Blaug, ed.).

As a theoretical economist,Rothbard's great book was *Man, Economy, and State* (1962), a treatise in the Austrian School tradition. In many ways, it rescued economics from its mostly deserved reputation. Instead of the dismal, statist, and incomprehensible pseudo-science students are used to,Rothbard gave us a tightly reasoned, sweeping case for the free market that is still used in classrooms all over the world.

Rothbard's *America's Great Depression* refutes the most common anti-capitalist slander: that the market caused the crash and economic downturn of the 1930s. He showed that the villain was government intervention, in the form of credit expansion and Herbert Hoover's high wage policies. Paul Johnson adopted the thesis for his *Modern Times*.

Rothbard was once asked to write a short book of American history. He agreed, and it eventually appeared. But *Conceived in Liberty* was four large volumes on 1620-1780. It is masterful, revisionist, and a pleasure to read. But what happened to the original project? Rothbard explained that he had discovered so much (tax revolts! uprisings! betrayals! power grabs!) that was left out of conventional accounts. Rothbard hardly let a moment go to waste, teaching through the day and writing through the night. His wife of 41 years, JoAnn, tells of being awakened once by his newest discovery: "That bastard Eli Whitney didn't invent the cotton gin after all!"

He also headed the academic programs of the Mises Institute, edited our *Review of Austrian Economics*, wrote a monthly column for our *Free Market*, spoke at our conferences, and lectured at our summer schools. He will be dearly missed. But how can we characterize his thought? Only by letting him speak for himself:

"I see the liberty of the individual not only as a great moral good in itself, but also as the necessary condition for the flowering of all the other goods that mankind cherishes: virtue, the arts and sciences, economic prosperity, civilization itself. But liberty has always been threatened by the encroachments of power, which seeks to suppress, control, cripple, and tax. Power, the enemy of liberty, is consequently the enemy of all the other goods and fruits of civilization. And power is almost always centered in that repository of violence: the state."

Logical, radical, sweeping, and profound: that was Murray N. Rothbard. The cause of liberty has never had a greater champion. ■

Remarks of L.H.R., Jr., at the UNLV Memorial Service, January 21, 1995

Murray N. Rothbard was one man with a typewriter, yet his ideas, grounded in the wisdom of the ages, will prove more enduring than any academic fad, more persuasive than any propaganda campaign, and more powerful than any politician.

Professor Hans-Hermann Hoppe has asked me to say a few words about Murray's political thought and activities. Of course, he longed for a society that fully recognized liberty and private property. He concluded very early in life that the only state that can be trusted is no state at all. As the organized monopoly of coercion and compulsion, and the institutionalization of theft and fraud, it cannot be limited, no matter how well-worded the constitution.

A Rothbardian world would be a world without politics. But Murray was no drop-out, and in fact loved politics. Who else could write a 5,000-word essay on a random week of electoral life in New York City, and make every word fascinating?

His political writings date from the early 1950s, when he wrote for *Faith and Freedom*, a hard-right, isolationist publication. In articles on the evils of the

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military buildup, he warned that American liberty would be sacrificed to the Cold War.

That led to his break with the Buckleyites, who ridiculed him and his ideas. They never took him on directly; they were smarter than that. Instead, they smeared him in private, and tried to deny him publishing and speaking opportunities.

As editor of *Left and Right* and *Libertarian Forum*, Murray also predicted that the Cold War would someday end because Soviet socialism would collapse. But, he said, the American military machine would keep on cranking out the planes and bombs. The real threat, he maintained, was not foreign Communism, but U.S. militarism and socialism, which would do what the Soviets never could: steal our liberty.

Murray developed a large and growing audience for such views, and continued with this theme for the *Rothbard-Rockwell Report*, writing against U.S. military interventions in Panama, the Gulf, Somalia, Ruwanda, and Bosnia. As the official Left and Right pushed for a New World Order, Murray, exasperated, suggested we save time and just invade the entire globe.

Well, here we are 35 years after Murray began his foreign policy writings. The warfare state is as big as ever, and so is the welfare state. And *National Review* is still cheerleading the Republican establishment to new levels of hypocrisy. And we can see that Murray was right all along: right about the military, right about politics, right about the Buckleyite conservatives and their love of state power.

That is why Murray has triumphed in the end. Despite its attempt to purge and destroy him, *National Review*'s influence on the intellectual world hasn't come close to Murray's. And when the Buckleyites are long forgotten, Murray's authority will not have begun to peak.

National Review has always cozied up to power, and like other neoconservatives, even holds up the dictators Lincoln and Roosevelt for our admiration.

For Murray, politics and criminal behavior were largely the same enterprise, to be treated with the same investigative rigor. Every day required another whodunit. His motivation in political writing was exposing crime and denouncing criminals.

Some people say that Murray's politics were all over the map. That is not true. He set the political standard as liberty itself, and worked with anyone who pursued it. At the height of the Vietnam War, for example, when the official Right was countenancing mass murder, he looked to the New Left as a vehicle for stopping this most vicious form of statism.

But as the Cold War ended, Murray was overjoyed to reunite with the remnants of the Old Right. After he was in paleoconservative circles only a few months, we began to witness new ideological hybrids springing up: anarcho-Southern agrarianism, anarcho-antifederalism, anarcho-protectionism, and anarcho-monarchism. Their advocates were his colleagues, and he was their conscience.

Murray's political thought is simple at its core but astounding in its application. He believed that common moral strictures, and standards of evaluation, should apply to the state. If theft is wrong, it is wrong. The same goes for murder, kidnapping, lying, and fraud. They are as wrong for the state as for everyone else.

"Always and ever," he wrote, "the government and its rulers and operators have been considered above the general moral law." It is this that Murray's right-wing "anarchism" was devoted to ending: he wanted to make government subject to the rule of law. But Murray was no Utopian; his view was that government power should be limited in any way possible, and he worked to make it so. The perfect was never the enemy of the good in his mind; the good was always an improvement.

His pioneering studies of private courts predated the popularity of private arbiters (Murray wanted to abolish "jury slavery" and force courts to pay a market wage). His work on private law enforcement predated the popularity of home protection and private security. His promotion of private roads predated their wide use in suburbs and malls. His promotion of private schools predated the anti–public school revolt.

In his last scholarly article, he developed the idea of the nation as something separate from either the state or the individual, a collective identity based on language, ethnicity, race, and religion. Murray celebrated the post-Cold War emergence of the

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nation as a countervailing power to the state, and presented the hope that "the brutal and repressive state will be gradually dissolved into a harmonious and increasingly prosperous social order." It was the final hope of a lifetime of hopes.

As head of the Mises Institute's academic programs, Murray spoke at all our conferences and teaching seminars, edited our *Review of Austrian Economics*, and wrote a monthly column for our *Free Market*. Most of all, he inspired our students, and left an army to carry his ideas into the future.

What Murray wrote about Mises applies in his case as well: "never would Mises compromise his principles, never would he bow the knee to a quest for respectability or social or political favor. As a scholar, as an economist, and as a person, Ludwig von Mises was a joy and an inspiration, an exemplar for us all."

Murray N. Rothbard is now also our exemplar, and it is our job to ensure that his example of political courage and academic integrity—in the midst of partisan cowardice and intellectual fraud—remains always before us. We need his guidance in our work, and his personal example of how a man should live. ■

Sarah Barton's column will return next issue.

Buckley Defames Rothbard

by L.H.R., Jr.

In his obituary of Murray N. Rothbard, William F. Buckley, Jr., attempts to blacken a great man's life and work (*National Review*, 2/6/95). His essay, entitled "Murray Rothbard, RIP," should actually be called, "I Hate Rothbard and I'm Glad He's Dead." Worse, it is error-ridden, confused, and dishonest.

The day after Rothbard's death, Buckley received—through *National Review* and his personal fax machine—a three-page announcement on Rothbard's professional career, complete with citations to his major works. There can thus be no excuse for errors of fact, especially in an obituary, and *National Review* should correct them immediately, although I am not holding my breath.

Buckley claims that Rothbard wrote a "four-volume history of thought, the final two volumes of which will appear in the spring." "From all appearances," Buckley then announces, scholars are "paying it the attention it deserves"—that is, they are ignoring it.

But Rothbard's *two volume* history of economic thought (published by Edward Elgar) appeared after the obituary. Scholars can't ignore a work before it is available. Not even Rothbard lived to see it. What appears later this year is a much-awaited two-volume collection of Rothbard's best journal articles published in Elgar's "Economists of the Century" series.

Buckley may think such details are unimportant, but then he was wrong to feign an interest in scholarship, make up facts to suit his bias, and use them to defame a dead man whose life was devoted to the highest academic ideals.

In a book review appearing "in 1957," Buckley writes, "Henry Hazlitt observed that [Rothbard] suffered from 'extreme apriorism.'" Hazlitt, a close friend and lifelong colleague of Rothbard's, cannot protest this mischaracterization. He died in 1993.

Hazlitt reviewed Rothbard's *Man, Economy, and State* in 1962, the year the book was published. By citing the year 1957, Buckley makes verification difficult, and for good reason.

Wrote Hazlitt (*National Review*, 9/29/62): Rothbard "has succeeded.... It is brilliant and original and profound.... It is in fact the most important general treatise on economic principles since Ludwig von Mises' *Human Action*."

Buckley also misquotes Hazlitt. The phrase "extreme apriorism" is not Hazlitt's, but Rothbard's, as the original review made clear. It is drawn from his highly influential article published five years earlier in the *Southern Economic Journal*, "In Defense of Extreme Apriorism."

Hazlitt's remark reflects his judgment that deductive methodology should apply to

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economics and not to legal theory; in the literature, *apriorism* is not a synonym for dogmatism, as Buckley seems to think.

Like one of Buckley's earlier attacks on Rothbard (*New York Times*, 2/16/71), this one falsely maintains that private lighthouses were central to Rothbard's economic program, and then ridicules the idea. Most likely, Buckley has confused Rothbard with Ronald Coase, the Nobel laureate who showed that lighthouses have historically been private.

Buckley also claims that "in recent years [Rothbard] disavowed Milton Friedman on the grounds that in endorsing the idea of school vouchers, Professor Friedman had sold out to the enemy, the State." In fact, Friedman and Rothbard clashed on the voucher question in 1974.

And vouchers trivialize their differences. As economics students know, Friedman is a Chicago School Monetarist and Rothbard is an Austrian School Misesian. They disagree on everything from monetary theory to methodology. But to understand this requires a modicum of study and intellectual patience.

There is also Buckley's claim, "which pains even to recall it," that "Rothbard physically applauded Khrushchev in his limousine as it passed by on the street." The year was 1959, and Dwight D. Eisenhower had invited Nikita Khrushchev—who had repudiated Stalin and emptied the Gulag of millions of political prisoners—to tour the U.S. The visit raised the possibility of peace. Said a young Richard M. Nixon: it was "justified and wise" (*New York Times*, 9/21/59).

But Buckley would have none of it. He devoted issue after issue of *National Review* to denouncing the event, sold "Khrushchev Not Welcome Here" bumper stickers, orchestrated a letter-writing drive, ran a press campaign on "What YOU Can Do About Khrushchev's Visit Now," and put on a rally the day of his arrival. In the pages of *National Review*, he attributed any anti-war sentiment to the tiny U.S. Communist Party.

Rothbard, in the tradition of the Old Right, saw the warfare state as part and parcel of the welfare state: both diminish our liberties. For Rothbard, peace might mean a return to normalcy, and an end to the "totalitarian bureaucracy" that Buckley had called necessary to fight the Cold War. Thus Rothbard, like Nixon, never signed on to Buckley's heated crusade.

But did Rothbard actually stand on the streets of New York to applaud Khrushchev? Of course not, and no one who knew him could imagine him fighting a crowd for a peek at a politician.

The last time Buckley raised the issue—in the 1971 *New York Times* article—he wrote that "Rothbard broke with *National Review* eleven years ago on the question of Khrushchev's visit." There was no claim that Rothbard "physically applauded." That is a posthumous invention.

Rothbard did refuse to join Buckley's hopped-up effort. Yet far from having "broken" with *NR*, Rothbard reviewed economics books for the magazine until 1961; Khrushchev came in 1959. (Note: Famed anti-communist *Whittaker Chambers* did break with *NR* over what he considered its crazy campaign. "K is no Stalin," he tried to explain to Buckley before resigning.")

The Buckley-Rothbard break occurred during the Vietnam War, and Rothbard wasn't the only one cast out. Buckley expelled all the skeptics of empire from his magazine and the conservative movement.

Once outside the *National Review* circle, Buckley concludes in his obituary, Rothbard, who had congestive heart failure, died "huffing and puffing" with "as many disciples as David Koresh."

That's a delusion. Rothbard became more prolific than ever, influencing three generations of economists, philosophers, historians, journalists, and activists the world over.

When historian and journalist E. J. Dionne deciphered the intellectual influences on the November 1994 election and the new Congress, he named Murray N. Rothbard and his mentor Ludwig von Mises.

William F. Buckley's name didn't appear, and no one would expect it to. The Cold War, now over, was Buckley's life. Everyone else has moved on. ■

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